

263 Re

THE

Rev. A. S. Cole D.D.

LORD'S DAY,

With kind regards

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

by

BY

D. READ, LL. D.

*Santa Ana
Aug 11 89*

PHILADELPHIA :

AMERICAN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY,

1420 Chestnut Street.

THE
LORD'S DAY,
THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

BY
D. READ, LL. D.



PHILADELPHIA:
AMERICAN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY.
1420 Chestnut Street.

BV

110

R43

1888

UG90
R22
DOWE
LIBRARY

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1886, by the
AMERICAN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY,
In the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

THE LORD'S DAY—THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

TEACHING OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

IN the beginning, the seventh day was the Sabbath Day, by the command of God. The reason alleged was that "in *it* God had rested from all his work which he had created and made" (Genesis ii. 3). The day was hallowed for the worship of God, and a rest day for man as a worker. From various hints in the Scriptures, we conclude that the Sabbath was observed by Noah and the Patriarchs, and by the Israelites before the Exodus (Genesis iv. 3; viii. 10-12; Exodus xvi. 22, 23). When God gave to Moses and Israel his law from Sinai, he incorporated into it a command to remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy (Exodus xx. 9-11). The same reason was given for this as had been at the beginning, namely: the fact that God created all things in six days and rested on the seventh.

It should be noticed that the name of God in the Fourth Commandment is in the Hebrew, Jehovah—the

Self-existent, Eternal One; and that in the first institution of the Sabbath, in Genesis ii. 2, it is Elohim—the Mighty One. This change of name marks a very decided advance in the revelation of the divine nature.

Moses gives to the Israelites another reason for their keeping the Sabbath holy, namely: the fact that Jehovah had brought them out from Egypt through a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. In this place particular stress is placed upon the duty of servants to observe the Sabbath, and of masters to allow to servants this rest; and they are reminded that they were themselves once servants in Egypt, and that Jehovah had brought them out from their bondage; and then it is added: "*Therefore, Jehovah thy God commandeth thee to keep the Sabbath Day*" (Deuteronomy v. 5).

Most commentators entertain the opinion that the Israelites were actually delivered from Egypt on the Sabbath Day; so from that time the Sabbath was to them the memorial of their national salvation, as well as of God's rest from creation. This opinion is confirmed, and the importance of the commemoration emphasized, by the well known fact that by divine direction the month of Abib, in which the Exodus occurred, was thenceforth made the beginning of the sacred year. The Jews had three special reasons for observing the Sabbath:

1. To commemorate God's rest from creation.
2. To

commemorate their national deliverance from Egypt. This, of course, could not apply to any other nation. 3. To distinguish them from all other nations as the chosen people of that God who, in the beginning, created the heavens and the earth, and who had redeemed them from their bondage in Egypt. Hence, in Exodus xxxi. 17, God said: "It is a sign between me and the children of ISRAEL forever."

TEACHING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Coming now to the New Testament, we find it plainly taught that the First Covenant, of which the Mosaic law was the principal part, has been set aside by divine direction, and a New Covenant established with the children of God by virtue of their relations to Jesus Christ. God speaks to *us* in his Son; and so this is the Christian Dispensation.

"God having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets, by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the *end of these days* spoken unto *us* in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds" (Hebrews i. 1).¹ This accords with what took place on the Mount of Transfiguration. Moses and Elias came down from heaven and talked with Jesus; a voice came to Peter, James, and John from the Father,

¹ I quote throughout from the Revised Version.

"This is my beloved Son; *hear ye him.*" "And suddenly looking round about them they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves" (Mark ix. 4-8). From that day Jesus, not Moses nor Elias, was supreme teacher. Christians were commanded to hear him. He remained, while Moses and Elias retired.

While Jesus was on the earth he gave authority to his apostles to bind and loose in his kingdom. In Matthew xvi. 19, Christ gives to Peter this power; and in Matthew xviii. 18, it is given to all. In harmony with this, Paul speaks of the church in Ephesus as "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone"; and John (Revelation xxi. 14) speaks of the New Jerusalem, the type of the redeemed church, as having "twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." The reason and justification of this authority given to the apostles, and exercised by them, lies in the fact of their inspiration by the Holy Spirit. Christ promised this inspiration. Before his ascension he breathed upon his apostles (John xx. 22, 23), and said, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit."

This wonderful endowment was realized on the Day of Pentecost. One special office of the Spirit was to lead the apostles into all the truth, and declare unto them things that are to come (John xvi. 13). By virtue of

possessing the Holy Spirit, the apostles claimed and exercised the power to direct the worship and work and discipline of the churches of Christ. (See Acts i. 16-26; vi. 2, 3; x. 48; Galatians i. 12; 1 Corinthians ii. 12, 13; 1 Corinthians v. 3-5, 13; 1 Corinthians xi. 1, 34; 2 Corinthians ii. 9; 1 Corinthians xvi. 1, 2; 2 John i. 10; Revelation i. 18, 19.) For these reasons we believe that the authority of the apostles in the New Dispensation is just as great as was that of Moses and the prophets under the Old; and that the New Testament Scriptures, written by these inspired apostles, are the final and supreme authority in all matters pertaining to Christian faith and practice. The late Dr. Francis Wayland says:¹ "We [Baptists] profess to take for our guide, in all matters of religious belief and practice, the *New Testament*, the *whole* New Testament, and *nothing* but the New Testament. Whatever we find there we esteem binding upon the conscience. What is not there commanded is not binding. No matter by what reverence for antiquity, by what tradition, by what councils, by what consent of any branches of the church, or of the whole church at any particular period, an opinion or practice may be sustained, if it be not sustained by the command or the example of Christ, or of his apostles, we value it only

¹ "Principles and Practices of the Baptist Denomination," Chapter 16.

as an opinion or precept of men, and we treat it accordingly."

This change of dispensations was foretold by the prophets of the Old Covenant. In Jeremiah xxxi. 31, we read: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." Through Ezekiel also (Ezekiel xxxvii. 26), God declared the same thing: "Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them." The Old Covenant here spoken of, as made when God took Israel by the hand to bring them out of Egypt, embraced the Decalogue; for this is often spoken of as the table of the covenant. (See Deuteronomy v. 2-22; ix. 15; 1 Kings viii. 9; Hebrews ix. 4.)

That First Covenant was conditioned upon the obedience of the Israelites; but the New Covenant was unconditional. God said, "I will and they shall." He took

the whole matter into his own hands, and its execution embraced the gift and mission of the Holy Spirit, as well as the mission of Christ.

The Apostle Paul, commenting on this change of covenants, says (Hebrews viii. 13): "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is vanishing away." In chapter ix. 5, he expressly tells us that the two tables of the law were a part of the Old Covenant; hence it follows that they were becoming old; waxing aged, and vanishing away with all the rest of the Old Covenant. In 2 Corinthians iii. 7-11, the apostle teaches most plainly and emphatically that the Decalogue was a ministration of death; that whatever glory it once had was far excelled by the ministration of the Spirit; and that that old glory was done away, and that the new glory abides. "But if the ministration of death, *written and engraven on stones (the Ten Commandments)*, came with glory, so that the children of Israel could not look steadfastly upon the face of Moses for the glory of his face; which glory was passing away; how shall not rather the ministration of the Spirit be with glory? For if the ministration of condemnation is glory, much rather doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For verily that which hath been made glorious hath not been made glorious in this respect, by reason of the

glory that surpasseth. For if that which passeth away was with glory, much more that which remaineth is in glory." In the second and third verses he says to the Corinthian Christians: "Ye are our epistle, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in tables that are hearts of flesh;" then he adds, fifth and sixth verses, "But our sufficiency is from God, who hath made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant: not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." Nothing could be plainer than this.

The Old Covenant, embracing the Decalogue, was one of the letter. It killed, it was passing away. The New Covenant was one of the Spirit, which giveth life, and it was to remain. In his Epistle to the Galatians, iii. 17-19, Paul teaches that there was a *Gospel* Covenant made with Abraham four hundred and thirty years before the giving of the law, and that the law was not designed to set this aside, but rather "was added because of transgressions, until the *seed* should come, to whom the promise was made." This plainly implies that when Christ, the seed, should come, the law would no longer be in force. In the twenty-fourth verse this is clearly stated under another figure: "So the law hath been our tutor to bring us unto

Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor (*i. e.*, we are no longer under the law). For ye are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. And if ye are Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise." Every believer by his baptism openly declared his reception of Christ, and thenceforward was an heir of Abraham and of Abraham's God.

In the fourth chapter and tenth verse, the apostle censures the Galatian Christians for observing days and months, and seasons and years. These terms are supposed to designate Sabbath days, the feasts of the new moon, the annual festivals of the Jews, and the Jubilee.

Hence we conclude that such Jewish observances were quite inconsistent with the relations which these Gentile Christians sustained to Christ.

1. If it should be urged against this view that Paul himself conformed to the Jewish laws and customs, we might reply, that the apostle explains his course as being a matter of policy, adopted to conciliate the prejudices of the Jews, in order to win them the more easily to Christ. (See 1 Corinthians ix. 20, 21.) Nothing could be more plain and emphatic than this statement of his own rela-

tions to the Mosaic law and to Christ. Among the Jews he acts *as if he were under the Mosaic law*, while he declares that he is not, *in fact*, under it; and among the Gentiles he acts *as if free, from all law*, while in reality he is under law to Christ. This law of Christ he explains as one of freedom and love, and then assures the Galatian Christians that "if they are led by the Spirit, they are not under law."

2. To the Church in Ephesus, Paul recalls their former condition, and says: "But now in Christ Jesus, ye that once were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians ii. 11-22); and that as a church, "they are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." Then he beseeches them to walk worthily of the calling wherewith they are called, to "put away the old man, and put on the new man, which, after God, hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth" (Ephesians iv. 22, 23).

So everywhere the inspired apostles urged duty and morality and holy living, not because they are commanded in the Decalogue, but because these duties belong to the new life in Christ, and are required by the law of love; because being in the Spirit, the fruits of the Spirit are expected of them. And this is in exact harmony with the teaching of Jesus himself in John xv. 5: "He that abideth in me and I in him, the same

beareth much fruit; for apart from me ye can do nothing."

3. In his Epistle to the Romans, Paul treats this question of the Christian's relations to the law and to sin in a similar way, and even more fully. In chapter sixth, he says, Christians have died to sin, and therefore will not live in it. The outward sign of this was their baptism, by which they had been buried with Christ, and also had risen with him; hence they were to reckon themselves "to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus." Then the question is started: "Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace?" The reply is, "God forbid."

This question, and the apostle's reply, afford the most convincing proof of the correctness of our interpretation of the Scriptures that treat of this subject. If Paul had believed that the law was still in force, he would have replied to their question: "You have misunderstood me; we are still under law, and the gospel is only a supplement to the law—a scheme of grace to provide for the payment of that part of the debt which we cannot pay." Instead of this, the apostle virtually re-asserts his former statements, that we are no longer under the law, but under grace; at the same time suggesting that this scheme of grace provides the most effective, and, indeed, the only means of securing holy living.

4. In chapter seventh, the apostle changes the figure. A woman is bound by the law to her husband, so long as her husband lives. But if her husband dies, she is free, and at liberty to be joined to another man. "Wherefore, my brethren," he says, "ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ, that ye should be joined to another, even to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God." Then he adds in verse sixth, "But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were holden; so that we serve in newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."

In Romans viii. 2-4, he says: "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as an offering for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." The thought here is, that in order to secure that holy living and spiritual state which the law required, the law was superseded by the gospel; the letter by the spirit; the ministry of Moses, the servant, by the ministry of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Then in verse tenth, the conclusion is stated that, "If Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the

spirit is life because of righteousness." The spirit of the renewed man lives a new life of love, by the faith of the Son of God; and so in the highest and only possible sense he fulfills the law, according to the saying of this same apostle: "For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Galatians v. 14).

5. The careful student of the New Testament will not fail to see how exactly the teachings of the Holy Spirit in the Epistles agree with the few seminal words of the Great Teacher himself (Matthew xii. 33): "Either make the tree good and its fruit good; or, make the tree corrupt and its fruit corrupt." Goodness in the tree must precede goodness in the fruit; a holy heart must precede a holy life. But a holy heart can be produced only by the cleansing power of the blood of Christ, and the regeneration of the Holy Spirit.

Thus it appears that the gospel provides for morality, and all good works, not by the precepts of the law, but by the abundance of grace and life in Christ Jesus, which are available by faith, by the blessed fact of abiding in Christ.

6. But embraced in this general treatment of the Christian's relations to the Old Covenant, including the law, we have specific directions in regard to the Sabbath. Paul says to the Colossians (chapter ii. 13), that they,

once dead in sins, had been quickened together with Christ; had been forgiven all their trespasses; that God had blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against them, and had taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross; then he adds: "Let no man *therefore*," that is, in view of the facts stated, "judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast-day, or a new moon, or a *sabbath day*; which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body," that is, substance, or reality, "is Christ's." Here the apostle puts a "*Sabbath day*" in the same category as meat and drink, feast days and new moons; and says the Christians are not to be condemned for their non-observance. He also says, "These things are a shadow of things to come," thereby suggesting that they are of temporary duration, and that the body, or reality, which they typify, is Christ's. In this passage we see how Christ, through his apostle, exercised the power which he claimed in Matthew xii. 8, when he said, "For the Son of man is Lord of the sabbath."

With Colossians (ii. 13-17) compare Hebrews (iii. and iv.), where the apostle treats of the rest which the Israelites failed to secure because of unbelief, and into which Christians enter through faith in Jesus Christ. Here it is taught that Moses and Joshua failed to lead the people into the new rest, so that after their ministry was ended, and after all that the law could do, there remaineth "*a*

sabbath rest for the people of God." Then referring to Christ, the apostle says: "For he that entered into his rest hath himself also rested from his works, as God did from his." By this we understand the apostle to suggest a comparison between the work of God as the *Creator*, and the work of Christ as the *Redeemer*. God rested from creation on the *seventh* day, and hallowed it; that was his Sabbath; and Christ rested from his redeeming work on the *first day*; and so that was his Sabbath, or rest day. Henceforth, therefore, the Christian finds the true rest, of which the old seventh day was the type and shadow, in Christ, "who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised again for our justification" (Romans iv. 25).

7. But it may be objected that Christ actually ceased or rested from his redeeming work on the day that he died, being the sixth day of the week. This objection is more specious than solid. The inspired word, as we have seen, represents Christ as actually entering into his rest on the first day of the week, when he rose from the dead; it declares "*that he was raised for our justification*"; and it also gives to the resurrection of Christ the most prominent and important place of any of the great facts of the Christian scheme. "If Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain; your faith is also vain . . . and ye are yet in your sins" (1 Corinthians xv. 11-19).

We can easily perceive from such strong words as these, why the apostle should say, "He was raised for our justification." The resurrection of Christ was also necessary as the final and satisfactory revelation and illustration of that incorruptible state of the body for which we hope as the full realization of the adoption of our Heavenly Father, as we read in 2 Timothy i. 10: "Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and *incorruption* to light through the gospel."

From these clear statements of the word, we are surely warranted in the conclusion that the resurrection of Christ was the finishing and crowning work of redemption, and hence that he rested from his work only when he rose on the first day of the week, and so forever hallowed that day as the Lord's Day.

THE APOSTLES AND THE EARLY CHURCHES.

1. Finally, the inspired apostles, and the early churches, by apostolic direction, did actually observe *the first day of the week* as the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath. Matthew xxviii. 1, and Mark xvi. 2, show that Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week. From John xx. 26, we learn that, after the first appearance of Jesus to his disciples on the day that he arose, his next appearance was one week later; that is, on the next *first day*. By this an expectation would naturally

be created in the minds of the disciples that their risen Lord would meet with them on this day; and so they would easily believe that he had actually set this day apart as their meeting day.

2. On the first day of the week the Holy Spirit came in great power, and fully inaugurated the New Dispensation, and so raised this day into still greater prominence.

3. From Acts xx. 7, where it is said, "And upon *the first day of the week*, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them," it is evident that the early churches were in the habit of meeting on the first day for worship, instruction, and the observance of the Lord's Supper. This fact proves beyond question that in the judgment of the apostles and early churches, the *first day* of the week was a holy worship day, to be observed in honor of Jesus Christ.

4. In 1 Corinthians xvi. 2, Paul gives direction to the church to have every member lay by a sum of money, for a charity fund, on each first day of the week. The Bible Union Version reads: "On *each first day* of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store."¹

Accepting this as the true rendering, the passage shows conclusively that there was a fixed custom of the

¹ This, as every Greek scholar knows, is the correct rendering of *κατὰ μίαν σαββάτον*. In other similar passages the Revised Version renders *κατα*, distributively, so that consistency as well as fidelity

church in Corinth to meet for religious worship on *every first day of the week*. And the preceding verse shows also that the same custom prevailed in the churches in Galatia, for the apostle says: "As I gave order to the churches in Galatia, so also do ye." Moreover, this also proves that the apostle claimed and exercised the divine right to regulate the order of worship and service in the churches, and hence that this observance of the first day of the week as the worship day—and consequently rest day—by the early churches, was sanctioned by the inspired apostle, and so by Christ himself, whose Spirit inspired and guided him.

5. In Revelation i. 10, John says: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day." From this it is evident that at that time—A. D. 96—there was a special day known as the *Lord's Day*, which, of course, was the first day of the

demand that it shall be so rendered here. Compare Luke ii. 41, His parents went *every year*, κατ' ἔτος. (Matthew xxvi. 55), I sat *daily* in the temple, καθ' ἡμέραν. (Mark xiv. 49), I was *daily* with you, καθ' ἡμέραν. (Hebrews x. 1), The same sacrifices *year by year*, i. e., every year, κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν. (Hebrews ix. 25), As the high priest entereth into the holy place *year by year*, i. e., every year, κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν. (Acts xvii. 17), He reasoned in the market place. . . . And every day, κατὰ πᾶσαν ἡμέραν. (Acts xviii. 4), He reasoned in the synagogue *every sabbath*, κατὰ πᾶν σάββατον. (Revelation xxii. 2), Yielding its fruit *every month*, κατὰ μῆνα ἑκάστον. From these passages, where the Revisers rendered κατὰ distributively in the sense of *every*, we must suppose that it was a mere oversight that it was not so rendered in 1 Corinthians xvi. 2.

week. From Tertullian, who wrote within a hundred years of the apostle's time, we learn that the distinguishing trait of a Christian in his time, was the fact that he observed the Lord's Day. When any person suspected of being a Christian was brought before a Roman magistrate, he was asked as a test question, "*Dominicum Servasti?*" "Hast thou observed the Lord's Day?" And if he replied, "*Christianus sum, intermittere non possum*"—"I am a Christian, I cannot omit it"—this was conclusive evidence against him and he was condemned. Tertullian also says (*De Orat.*, chap. 23): "On the day of the Lord's resurrection Christians are not only excused from kneeling in prayer, but they ought also to be free from all anxiety; and that they should lay aside all business, lest they should give place to the devil."

6. As further testimony to the fact of the observance of the Lord's Day by the early churches, we quote from the Epistle of Barnabas (xiii. 10): "For which cause we observe the eighth day with gladness, in which Jesus rose from the dead." In the Epistle of Ignatius (iii. 3), we have similar testimony. He says: "Wherefore if they who were brought up in these ancient laws came nevertheless to the newness of hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but keeping the Lord's Day, in which also our life is sprung up by him and through his death." And in the eleventh verse he further says: "It is absurd to

name Jesus and then to Judaize." In the first verse he says, "For if we still continue to live according to the Jewish law, we do confess ourselves not to have received grace."

7. Pliny, in his letter to the Roman Emperor Trajan, A. D. 110 or 111, says that "the Christians were accustomed on a *stated day* to meet before daylight, and repeat among themselves a hymn to Christ as to a god, to bind themselves by a sacred obligation not to commit any wickedness after which it was their custom to meet again at a promiscuous and harmless meal." This testimony from an enemy shows conclusively that the primitive church observed a day of worship to Christ, and also that on that day one feature of this worship was the observance of the Lord's Supper. What day that was, we have already seen from Acts xx. 7, where Luke says: "The disciples came together to break bread on the first day of the week." This completes the testimony to the *fact* of the observance of the *first day* of the week as a day of worship and of rest by the primitive churches, under the direction and sanction of the inspired apostles, that is, by divine direction.

SUMMING UP, WE HAVE SHOWN:

I. That the observance of the *seventh day* as the Sabbath was required of the Jews for three reasons:

First, to commemorate the rest of God after creation; second, to commemorate their national deliverance from Egypt; third, to distinguish the Jews from all other nations as the chosen people of that God who was the Creator of all things, and was also their Deliverer and Ruler.

II. That the ancient prophets foretold that the Mosaic, or Old Covenant, was to be superseded by a New Covenant, under the Dispensation of the Spirit.

III. That Christ Jesus actually did fulfill the Old Covenant and inaugurate a New Covenant.

IV. That those who by faith entered into the New Covenant, were specifically released from all obligation to the Old Covenant.

V. That by divine direction the Christians were specifically released from the observance of the Jewish feasts and sacred seasons, *including the Sabbath*.

VI. That the Scriptures of the Old Covenant contained intimations that a new Sabbath, or rest day, would be established under the New Covenant.

VII. That Christ's resurrection day, *the first day of the week*, has been actually observed as a day of worship and of rest by the churches from the time of the resurrection of Christ down to the present.

These points, thus established, prove conclusively that the first day of the week is and ought to be the Christian

Sabbath. This conclusion is strengthened by the following considerations:

The manifestation of Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of God (see Romans i. 4) and Redeemer of his people, by his resurrection from the dead on the first day of the week, was the proper completion and culmination of a series of progressive revelations begun in Eden. At the first God manifested himself as the Creator, disclosing almighty power in his works. To Moses, God manifested himself as the Self-existent, Eternal One, and the Messenger of the covenant, disclosing his justice and providential care over his people, and a purpose of mercy running through all time.

Under the New or Christian Dispensation, God manifested himself in the flesh by the incarnation of the Eternal Son, disclosing the high attribute of infinite love through the redemption of his people by the precious blood of Christ. The cross of Christ took up into itself the almighty power and eternal providence of God, and crowned and glorified these with LOVE. And let us bear in mind that all these revelations and disclosures, from first to last, were made by Jesus Christ himself. He was the CREATOR. "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." (John i. 3). "All things have been created through him and unto him" (Colossians i. 16). He was also the

MESSENGER of the Mosaic Covenant. "And the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in" (Malachi iii. 1). When this prophecy was fulfilled by the bringing into the second temple of the child Jesus, then was also realized the fulfillment of the words of the prophet Haggai, when he declared that "the latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former," and "I will fill this house with glory" (chapter ii. 7, 9.) Accordingly when Simeon took the child Jesus into his arms he said: "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples; a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel" (Luke ii. 30-32).

In Jesus Christ all prophecies were accomplished, all types and shadows realized, all hopes fulfilled, all glory revealed; in him all divine manifestations culminated. Creation, and moral government by law and providence, all were subordinate to redemption by the cross, and so the "Father put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Ephesians i. 22).

It was therefore to be expected, and was eminently suitable, that the old seventh-day Sabbath, which commemorated Christ's work as Creator and as the Messen-

ger of the Hebrew Covenant, should be superseded by a new day—the *first day* of the week, which commemorates his most glorious work, that of redemption, and should be called the Lord's Day; which should be the perpetual sacred, holy day of the Lord's redeemed church. To leave the Sabbath of the Old Dispensation in vogue under the Christian Dispensation, would virtually exalt the work of creation above that of redemption, rob the cross of its glory, and the church of one of its principal means of comfort and of power. Let it ever be borne in mind that the Lord's Day is observed in honor of the same Being that was honored by the old Sabbath, but in special commemoration of his final and most glorious work—the redemption of his church by the shedding of his precious blood. By as much, therefore, as redemption was more glorious than creation, by so much is the Lord's Day more glorious than the seventh-day Sabbath.

The New Covenant has its own new Scriptures, its new gift of the Spirit, its new church, its new ministry,—a ministry for service and preaching, not a priesthood for sacrifice,—its new ordinances, its new work of evangelizing the world, and has also (as it needs) its *new day of worship*. Henceforth, therefore, Christ chooses to be known and worshiped, and loved and served, as Redeemer. Therefore, henceforth, and forever, we rest

from our earthly labor on the first day of the week, as Christ rested from his redeeming work on that day; and we worship and adore him as our Redeemer and Lord.

How shall we secure the proper observance of the Lord's Day?

The Lord's Day is one of joy and rejoicing. Every Lord's Day morning is an Easter morning, and should be greeted with the glad hosanna, "The Lord is risen!" From the heavenward side of the empty tomb, our risen Lord sends back the glad message to his people: "Be of good cheer; because I live, ye shall live also." In his victory over death, we see the pledge of our own victory over death and the grave, through faith in him. In his risen, incorruptible life, we see the ground of our hope of an incorruptible life. "But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him" (Romans vi. 8). "We shall be like him" (1 John iii. 2).

When the Jewish High Priest came forth alive from the Most Holy Place behind the veil, whither he had gone with the blood of atonement, it was a visible proof that God had accepted the atonement in behalf of the repentant people. So when our great High Priest, Jesus Christ, went into the Most Holy Place in the heavens—even the presence of God—with his own precious blood,

in behalf of his church, and then came out from the veil of the spiritual world alive, it was a demonstration that the just and holy God had accepted that supreme sacrifice in our behalf. Thus the resurrection of Jesus Christ becomes the ground of our pardon and justification, "He rose again for our justification."

It is plain, therefore, that only those who have been justified by faith in Christ, and have been born of the Spirit, and who with holy, loving, grateful hearts, worship him as their Supreme Lord and only Saviour, can enter into the spirit of genuine Lord's Day observance. To the true believer in Christ, his worship and service are a joy and delight, and a royal privilege. Every true disciple will, therefore, avoid all that is secular and worldly; not so much because such things are sinful, as because they interfere with the high spiritual freedom of his renewed soul, and prevent its enjoyment and progress in the divine life. He sings, in joyful lays:

Day of all the week the best,
Emblem of eternal rest.

Whatever is helpful to his Christian life and to his usefulness in the service of Christ, he will use; and whatever interferes with these high ends, he will discard.

As to those who are not Christians, the only way to secure from them the proper observance of the Lord's Day is to win them to Christ. The Spirit of life in Christ

Jesus will make them free from the law of sin and death. By holy living on our part ; by the brightness and beauty of our Christian characters ; by all the sweet amenities of social intercourse ; by our steadfastness to principle ; by the most perfect consistency of our lives with our professions ; by the tender pleadings of eloquent lips and tearful eyes, and the earnest prayers of burdened hearts ; and by the lofty and sustained enthusiasm of a divine mission, —let us bring men to Christ, and we shall not fail to secure the proper observance of his holy day.

The duty of the civil magistrate in regard to the observance of the Lord's Day.

Christ said (John xviii. 36): "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." Here Christ refuses to employ physical force. His kingdom is not of the world ; and civil laws and the force of the magistrate are not the means to promote its advancement. It is a kingdom of truth and love, and must therefore be promoted by truth and love. Because each man is a free moral agent under the government of God, he is accountable to God. This personal accountability to God carries with it the right of every man to decide for himself his religious belief and his worship. With these, the State has no right to interfere.

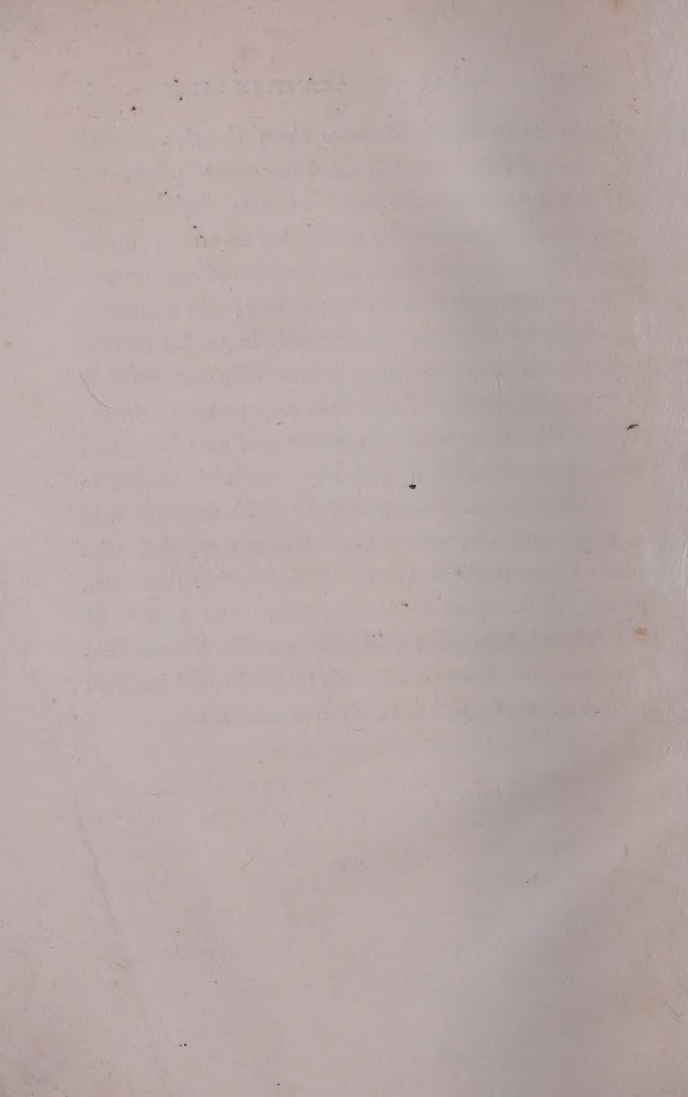
These rights of conscience are inalienable. For the protection of these, with other inalienable rights, States are organized, civil laws enacted, and magistrates elected. So far as religion is concerned, the sphere of the State is described in one word—PROTECTION.

Every man should be protected in the exercise of his natural, that is, his divinely given rights. If the State should forget this and pass any law contravening the citizen's religious right, he may disregard this law, as Daniel disregarded the law of Darius (Daniel vi. 10), and as Peter said to the Jewish Council: "We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts v. 29).

As Christians, we ask no help from the State to propagate religion, nor to secure the religious observance of the Lord's Day. On this day the courts should not sit, notes should not be collectable, and no secular business should be compulsory, because such things would interfere with the religious rights and privileges of Christians. If a Jew, or a Sabbatarian, or an Atheist, or an idolater chooses to attend to private secular business on this day, we do not ask to have him restrained by law, if he does not interfere with our religious rights and privileges. We do not ask to have the liquor saloons closed by law on Sunday, because the day is a holy day, the Lord's Day, but because the saloons are nuisances and dangerous to society always; and if we cannot secure their closing seven days

in the week, we are glad to have them closed, and their streams of "liquid fire and distilled damnation" obstructed one day out of seven. However much we may deprecate the demoralizing tendencies of Sunday theatres and concerts, games and excursions, and the sale of candies and fruits, and newspapers on the Lord's Day; still we ask for legal restraint upon such things only in so far as they may directly interfere with public religious worship. As Christians, we ask of the State only protection in the exercise of our rights of conscience; and we will depend alone upon the truth of God and the Spirit of God to secure the triumph of Christianity. With an open field and a fair fight, Christianity is more than a match for the world: "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Corinthians i. 25). The almightiness of the Eternal God is in the cross. Hence Christ said: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

THE END.



GTU Library



3 2400 00690 8259

GTU Library
2400 Ridge Road
Berkeley, CA 94709
For renewals call (510) 649-2500
All items are subject to recall

